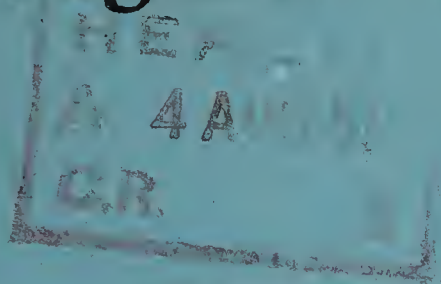


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Borough of Ludlow



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the Year

1950

Public Health Officers

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

**JAMES L. GREGORY, M.B., CH.B., F.R.F.P.S., D.P.H.,
D.T.M. AND HY.**

SANITARY INSPECTOR:

**H. V. JAMES, M.I.M. AND CY. ENG.,
CERT. ROYAL SAN. INST.**

Contents of Report

Section A. STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

„ **B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH
SERVICES.**

„ **C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.**

„ **D. HOUSING.**

„ **E. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.**

„ **F. PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER
INFECTIOUS DISEASES.**

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1950.

LUDLOW.

1st June, 1951.

Mr. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the report on the health of the Borough for the year ending 31st December, 1950. It has been drawn up in accordance with the Ministry of Health's Circular No. 112/50, dated 6th December, 1950.

The estimated population is now 6,410, an increase of 170 since 1949. The statistics are satisfactory and show a Birth-rate of 16·2 and a Death-rate of 10·0 per 1,000 of the population.

No epidemic of Infectious Disease falls to be recorded but there were a few cases of Poliomyelitis notified, five in all, none of which were fatal. This disease was prevalent in the whole country during the late summer and autumn months.

During the year the Council built 26 aluminium bungalows and at the end of the year a further number of 28 traditional two bedroomed houses were under construction. In addition to these a total of six houses were built by private enterprise. Particulars of the Council's new programme of building will be found in Section D of the report.

One of the most serious problems facing every Council is that of the gradual deterioration of the older houses, many of which are becoming more dilapidated each year. The cost of repairs has risen to such an extent that many landlords cannot afford to have their property kept in proper order. Although "Improvement Grants" were provided for under the Housing

Act, 1949, very few applications have been made for these, even although a 50% grant may be given. It is evident that some further legislation is required on this matter, as otherwise the provision of new houses will not even keep pace with the number of old houses which are becoming more and more unfit every year.

During the year there has been increased interest in the problem of the care of the older members of the community, many of whom find themselves unable to get help in their homes and who do not wish to be removed to Institutions. The provision of smaller houses by the Council will do much to help in some of these cases.

JAMES L. GREGORY,

Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.

STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS—

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	86	43	43
Illegitimate	...	...	10	7	3

Birth-rate per 1,000 of population = 16·2

STILL BIRTHS—

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	2	2	0
Illegitimate	...	...	0	0	0

Still Birth-rate per 1,000 total births = 20·4

			Total	M.	F.
DEATHS	...	...	81	36	45

Death-rate per 1,000 of population = 10·0

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES—

		Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total Births
(a) from Puerperal Sepsis	...	Nil	—
(b) from other Puerperal causes	...	Nil	—
		—+—	—+—
Totals	...	—	—
		—+—	—+—

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR—

		Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 Live Births
(a) Legitimate children per 1,000 live legitimate births	...	3	34
(b) Illegitimate children per 1,000 live illegitimate births	...	0	0
(c) all children per 1,000 total live births	... ..	3	31

Number of Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	16
„ „ „ Measles (all ages)	...	...	0
„ „ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	0
„ „ „ Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	...	...	0
„ „ „ Tuberculosis—Pulmonary	...	...	1
		Non-pulmonary	0

Section A

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Area (in acres)	1,068
Estimated population (mid 1950)	6,410
Number of Inhabited Houses as at 31st Dec., 1950 ...	1,742
Rateable Value of the district	£36,167
Product of 1d. Rate	£140

POPULATION.

The estimated population as at mid 1950 is 6,410 and this shows an increase of 170 over the figure for 1949.

The natural increase of the population, *i.e.* the excess of births over deaths, was 15.

BIRTHS.

There were 96 live births (50 males and 46 females), and of these there were 10 illegitimate. The corrected birth-rate was 16·2 per 1,000 of the population, which compares favourably with a rate of 15·8 for England and Wales.

STILL-BIRTHS.

Two still-births were reported and this gives a still-birth rate of 20·4 per 1,000 total births (live and still).

DEATHS.

A total of 81 deaths were registered (36 male and 45 female), and the corrected death-rate is 10·0 per 1,000 of the population. The death-rate for England and Wales was 11·6.

The "Crude Death-rate" was 12·4 but for purposes of comparison with other districts it is necessary to use the "corrected" death-rate, which is obtained by multiplying the "crude" rate by the "factor of correction" which, in this area, is 0·81. If this were not done an area in which there was a high proportion of older persons would show a high death-rate as compared with a district where the population was younger.

As in other recent years, the chief causes of death were diseases of the heart and circulation, cancer and cerebral hæmor-

rhage. A table showing the causes of death will be found at the end of the report. The only death from an infectious disease was one from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

For the fourth year in succession no death was reported from causes associated with child-birth. The rate for the whole country was 0·86 per 1,000 total births.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

There were three deaths of children under one year of age and this is the same as in the previous year. The Infantile Mortality rate is therefore 31 per 1,000 live births.

This is very slightly higher than the I.M.R. for the whole country, which was 29·8. The three infant deaths were all of infants under one week old and were due to prematurity and debility.

In order to ascertain the total loss of infant lives we must take in conjunction with them the figures for Still-births. Since 1949 the total numbers of still-births, plus infant deaths, have been as follows :-

Year		Still Births	Infant Deaths	Total
1946	...	8	7	15
1947	...	5	5	10
1948	...	2	2	4
1949	...	1	3	4
1950	...	2	3	5

On looking back to the year 1941 it is found that there has been a gradual drop in the number of deaths of infants and in the the number of still-births, but the drop has not been marked. The years 1944, 1946 and 1947 showed the least satisfactory figures. In 1944 there were six still-births and seven infant deaths.

Section B

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

STAFF.

There are no changes to record. The officers are a Medical Officer of Health (part time) and a Sanitary Inspector who also holds the post of Borough Surveyor. Their names and qualifications are given at the beginning of the report.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

These are provided by the Laboratory at Shrewsbury, which is directed by the Medical Research Council for the Ministry of Health. All bacteriological reports are received from the laboratory and also reports on water, milk, ice cream and other food stuffs. Close co-operation is maintained with the laboratory and my thanks are due to Dr. Jones and his Staff for the great assistance received throughout the year in so many branches of the work.

NURSING SERVICES IN THE HOME.

These services are carried out by the County Council under Part III of the National Health Service Act, 1946. Particulars of the work carried out in Ludlow will be found in the Annual Report of the County Medical Officer of Health.

HOME HELP SERVICE.

Mrs. Martin Wilson reports that the number of Home Helps has increased during the year from five to eight. Four of this number are full time and the remainder part time. The number of applications from housholders was 59 and the hours worked numbered 8,272 as against 6,619 in the previous year.

The amount of money collected was £246, which is less than in 1949, due to the larger number of persons who are helped without charge. The office is now at 24, Corve Street, Ludlow (Tel. No. Ludlow 382) and this has been found to be more central than the former office.

A large number of applications from the Rural District have been received and several very remote housenold have been visited. The service undoubtedly fills a real need and is expanding. The County Council have decided, however, that no extension of the service in the County is to be allowed for the present for financial reasons.

At the present time, and in the almost complete absence of domestic help, it seems a pity that this service should not be further developed as it is doing a very useful work indeed. Many old persons could not carry on at home without the help given and might have to be accommodated in Institutions at a very much greater expense to the community.

It is to be hoped that in the future this service will be able to develop further.

Section C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

This section of the report deals with Water Supplies, Drainage, Sewage Disposal and Refuse Collection, etc., and I am indebted to the Borough Surveyor for the following details regarding these matters:-

WATER SUPPLY.

The town supplies proved adequate during the year except for a few short periods when water was taken from the Elan Aqueduct to supplement the supply. The total taken from this source was eight million gallons, which is much less than in a normal year.

No extensions to the public mains were made during the year. Periodic tests of the mains proved them to be in a satisfactory condition with a minimum of wastage.

As regards purity of the supply during the year, ten samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and were all found to be satisfactory. All the supplies are chlorinated. The results of chemical examinations of samples from each of the three sources were given in last year's report. These were all satisfactory.

More than 90% of the houses in the Borough have a piped supply laid on and the rest get water from stand-pipes.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

There were no extensions to sewers during the year. The Surveyor reports that of a total of 1,742 houses in the Borough, 1,690 are now connected to the sewerage system.

The Disposal Works and Pumping Plant have been inspected and are in good order. A sample of the final effluent was taken in February, 1950, and was found to be satisfactory. A copy of the analysis will be found in the Report for 1949.

The extension of the main sewer along the Sheet Road will allow several outlying houses to be connected in addition to serving the Council's new Housing Estate.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

The weekly collection of refuse has been continued in the Borough as before. The Surveyor reports that there is a shortage of soil for covering the face of the Tip.

SALVAGE.

Salvage of waste paper was discontinued in September, 1949, but has been re-commenced in February, 1951, and is proving satisfactory as regards the amount collected.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACTS.

The Inspector reports that there are 86 Factories on the register and that 80 visits were paid during the year.

Twelve defects were found and in each case these were remedied after informal notice.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PEST ACT, 1949.

Under this Act the duty of keeping down rats and mice is laid upon the Borough Council. The Surveyor reports that practically all the town has been surveyed and treatment has been carried out where necessary. The shopping centres were found to be badly infested. All the sewers, tips and the sewage disposal works have been treated on three occasions during the year and the results have been satisfactory.

The following figures are extracted from the report to the Ministry of Agriculture :-

		Inspected	Treated
Private Dwellings	...	195	71
Business Premises	...	170	55

REPORTS ON CHEMICAL EXAMINATIONS OF WATER SAMPLES.

In April, 1951, reports were received on samples of water taken from the Burway and Fountain Springs supplies, and submitted for chemical examination. The results correspond very closely to the results shown in previous analysis and are both satisfactory.

		Burway	Fountain Spring
Total Solids in solution	...	32·0	24·0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	...	0·8	0·15
Nitrites	...	—	—
Chlorine in Chlorides	...	1·9	1·5
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 80° F	...	0·04	0·03
Free and Saline Ammonia	...	Nil	Nil
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	0·004	0·003
Lead, Copper, Zinc	...	Nil	Nil
Microscopic examination of sediment	...	Nil	Nil
Temporary hardness in Degrees Clark	...	12·3	9·8
Permanent „ „ „	...	4·3	1·8
pH value	...	7·2	7·4

These results, combined with satisfactory bacteriological reports, show the two waters to be free from organic or chemical pollution and safe for domestic use.

The pH values are normal and indicate an absence of acid in either sample. This is of importance as an acid water may affect lead pipes and cause poisoning from lead.

The Elan Aqueduct supply which comes from high-lying peaty ground is treated with lime to reduce the acidity.

Section D

HOUSING.

Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	1,742
Number of Houses owned by the Council	...	...	...	314
Number of Houses allotted by the Ministry for 1951	...	...	...	30
Applications for Improvement Grants	...	...	...	2
Applications for Council Houses	...	...	...	*
Total Houses completed in 1950	...	...	...	32

* Former lists have been cancelled and no definite number of these is available at the present time.

Type of House	Number completed in 1950	Number under construction as at 31.12.50
Traditional	Nil	28
Aluminium Bungalows	26	Nil
Houses built by private enterprise	6	3

Of the 26 Aluminium Bungalows built during the year, four are at Temeside and twenty-two at Clee View. These are of a very satisfactory type and have been a welcome addition to the houses already built on the Estate.

The 28 Traditional type houses, which were under construction at the end of the year, are of the two-bedroomed type and are at Wheeler Road. These smaller houses will be of great value to the Council as there are so many applicants now whose families are small and who do not need a three-bedroomed house. This applies both to young married persons and to old couples who are living alone after their families have grown up.

HOUSING PROGRAMME.

The Council plan to build 40 houses of the Traditional type and it is expected that they will be commenced in 1951. Of these,

twelve will be for aged persons, twelve will be traditional three-bedroomed type and eight will be traditional two-bedroomed type, all these being at Sandpits Road. In addition, there will be eight two-bedroomed traditional type houses at Whitbread Road.

The following table gives a summary of the progress of housing and the building planned for 1951:-

SITES OF COUNCIL HOUSES, 1950—1951.

Site	Type	Number completed in 1950	Number under construction at 31.12.50	Number to be commenced in 1951
Temeside	Aluminium			
	Bungalows	4	—	—
Clee View	do.	22	—	—
Wheeler Road	Traditional (2 bedrooms)	—	28	—
Whitbread Road	do.	—	—	8
Sandpits Road (a)	do.	—	—	8
	(b) Traditional (3 bedrooms)	—	—	12
	(c) Traditional (Old persons dwellings)	—	—	12
	Totals	26	28	40

In 1946 the Council owned 175 houses and since then the number has increased as follows:-

Year	Number of Council Houses
1946	175
1947	179
1948	216
1949	288
1950	314

The Surveyor reports that 12 cases of over-crowding were abated by the families being moved into Council Houses but that there are still a considerable number of private houses which are over-crowded and also a few Council Houses. The building of the 28 two-bedroomed houses at present under construction should help to relieve a number of cases where two families are in one house and thus causing over-crowding.

HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

Houses inspected	...	...	...	170
Notices served	...	...	...	51
Notices complied with	...	...	...	50

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

Two applications were received under the Housing Act, 1949, but they were both refused by the Ministry of Health as they did not comply with the conditions as set out in Section 20, 3b of the Act.

Section E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

As in the last ten years or so, all Meat intended for human consumption is inspected at the Ministry of Food's slaughter-house at Craven Arms. This inspection is carried out by the Sanitary Inspectors of the Rural District Council, in whose area the premises are situated.

With regard to Shops in the town, the Borough Inspector reports that all of them, where food is prepared or sold, were visited at least three times in the year and the following goods were condemned as unfit :-

Milk	...	247 tins	Vegetables	...	187 tins
Jam	...	34 „	Fish	...	72 „
Soup	...	21 „	Meat	...	73 „
Fruit	...	156 „	Coffee	...	8 „

ICE CREAM.

There are 15 retailers of Ice Cream on the register and of these eleven merely retail proprietary brands. The remaining four prepare ice cream by what is known as the "cold mix" process, which consists in adding water to a powder prepared by one of the large manufacturers and then freezing the mixture. The Inspector reports that of five samples taken during the year each of them was in Grade I.

MILK.

Details were given in last year's Report of the new Acts and Regulations which came into force on the 1st October, 1949. By these the supervision of milk production at the farm passed to the Ministry of Agriculture, and the supervision of Pasteurisation Plants was transferred to the County Council.

Supervision of Dairies which are not at farms remains with the Local Authority, and in Ludlow there are two of these, one selling Tuberculin Tested Milk and the other Pasteurised Milk. The premises concerned have been inspected and are satisfactory.

The fact that milk can be the vehicle by which many diseases are spread, *e.g.* Tuberculosis, Typhoid Fever, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria and Undulant Fever, makes it so essential that the safety of the supply should be treated as a matter of paramount importance. In the larger cities more than 90% of the milk is now pasteurised and thus made safe. In other areas the shortage of the necessary plant to treat the milk with has delayed the pasteurisation of milk supplies, but it cannot be long now before a much larger proportion of the milk supply in the country generally will be pasteurised. Power already exists for areas to be designated in which none but T.T. or heat-treated milk may be sold.

Under the new Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949, the Medical Officer of Health is given additional powers of control with regard to the prevention of the spreading of disease through milk. If he has reason to believe that a milk is responsible for spreading disease he can either stop the supply or have it heat-treated before being sold for human consumption. Powers are also given for dealing with milk workers who may be suffering from a communicable disease.

FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS.

No case of Food Poisoning was notified in the Borough during the year. The Ministry of Health are concerned regarding the increase throughout the country generally of the number of cases of food poisoning since the war and a Conference on this question was held in London in August, 1950.

Outbreaks of this kind used to average about 50 per annum before the war, but now number nearly 1,000 per annum.

The two main reasons for this increase are : (1) the fact that we are eating more "made up" food than formerly, and (2) the increase in communal feeding.

Nearly all the outbreaks are caused by bacteria of which the commonest are the Salmonella group of organisms of which there are at least 200 different types. It may be said that food poisoning of chemical origin is very rare indeed in this country.

Apart from the actual causal organism involved the next most important factor in causation is temperature. Food should not be kept for any length of time at a temperature which is favourable to the growth and multiplication of organisms. In some communal kitchens or canteens food is partly cooked and then kept at a moderate temperature for a time until it is required. This enables organisms to multiply as the original cooking may not have been sufficient to destroy them.

Food should be cooked as soon as possible and any remaining after a meal should be kept in a refrigerator, if possible. In this connection it has been pointed out that the tax on refrigerators is no doubt, in part, the cause of their not being in more general use in this country.

The necessity of strict personal hygiene on the part of all those handling food in any way cannot be insisted on too much as it is through faulty hygiene—especially the failure to wash the hands after use of the W.C.—that so many diseases have been spread.

Section F

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following cases of Infectious Disease were notified during the year :-

NOTIFICATIONS, 1950.

Disease		Number notified	Admitted to Hospital	Deaths
Scarlet Fever ...	...	1	0	0
Whooping Cough ...	...	7	0	0
Undulant Fever ...	...	1	0	0
Poliomyelitis ...	...	5	5	0

It will be seen from the above figures that the town has been very free from Infectious Diseases during the year under review. Neither Measles or Whooping Cough were prevalent among the children, and for the eighth year in succession no case of Diphtheria was notified. The last cases of this disease were in 1942.

Poliomyelitis was prevalent in the country as a whole during the late summer and autumn months, and five cases were notified

in Ludlow. All these cases were of children under five years of age and in four of the cases there was some paralysis. The cases occurred in different areas of the town and there did not appear to be any connection between them as far as could be ascertained by enquiries. There were no fatal cases.

Scarlet Fever has declined both in the number of cases and in the severity of the disease and its complications. No special reason for this change is known but we do know that infectious diseases undergo changes in their prevalence and severity.

Immunisation of the children against Diphtheria has been carried out as in previous years at the Schools, at the Infant Welfare Centre and by private practitioners. Particulars of the numbers immunised during the year will be found in the report of the County Medical Officer, as the responsibility for this work now rests with the County Council Health Department.

A note was made in last year's report on Undulant Fever and it was pointed out that in this country the disease is chiefly spread through the milk supply. When a case is brought to notice the Veterinary Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture is asked to have enquiries made at the farm where the milk supply in the case was produced so that any animals which may be responsible for the spread of disease can be discovered and their milk either withdrawn from supply or pasteurised. The only way to eliminate the danger from this disease is to have all milk pasteurised.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The total number of cases of this disease on the register at the end of the year was as follows :-

MALES		FEMALES		Total
Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	
15	13	22	7	57

The above figures show an increase of six Pulmonary cases (female) as compared with the number on the register at the end of 1949.

NEW CASES.

Seven new Pulmonary cases were notified (one male and six female).

DEATHS.

Only one death from Tuberculosis was reported, the case being that of a male, aged 28, and the disease was of the Pulmonary type. Last year there were six deaths.

DEATH-RATE.

The death-rate per 1,000 of the population was 0·154. Death-rate from Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis = Nil.

CANCER.

There were sixteen deaths from Cancer, which is three more than in 1949, and gives a death-rate of 2·496 per 1,000 of the population. This disease takes second place as a cause of death in the Borough.



CAUSES OF DEATH, 1950.

Cause of Death.				Number of Deaths.
I.	Heart Disease	...	...	33
II.	Cancer	...	...	16
III.	Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	...	...	11
IV.	Bronchitis and Pneumonia	...	...	8
V.	All other causes	...	...	13
Total				81

